



# Newsletter 37



## ISCA MEETING, OCTOBER 2015 - BOOK NOW!

As President Wuest wisely observes in his column below, "Membership in ISCA truly has its privileges". This is true for many reasons, but never more so than in the opportunities that are provided to members to meet and to share ideas and experiences of show cave management that assist all operators and managers in future decision making. The next such opportunity is fast approaching with the **ISCA Meeting of October 17-24** to be held in Saalfeld, Germany and Werfen, Austria. The organising committee of Yvonne Wagner and Friedrich Oedl have worked hard to create a fantastic program of events and tours in this wonderful part of the world as well as allowing time for

networking and for the meetings of the ISCA Board. All information is available on the [ISCA website](#) or at <https://www.feengrotten.de/ISCA/>. This meeting will also be a genuinely historic one, marking as it does the **25th anniversary of the founding of ISCA**. A presentation on the history of ISCA will be a highlight of the October meeting.

There is also a fabulous pre-Meeting schedule with great travel options available. Any ISCA member who can possibly attend this meeting is certain to have both a productive outcome in the coming together of the ISCA 'family' and a memorable experience travelling between Germany and Austria. It is strongly advised to [BOOK NOW!](#)

It seems incredible to me that half a year has passed since the last edition of the Newsletter. As always, there have been changes and debates, meetings and new ISCA members to celebrate! The October meeting of ISCA in Germany/Austria is fast approaching and hopefully will give many members the chance to renew friendships and catch up on the news from the world of show cave management. These opportunities to gather together are always of great benefit to all attendees and are so important for a strong organisation to grow and develop. And they are such great fun!

Best wishes to all.

Dan Cove



## THE ISCA NEWSLETTER - CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Is there something happening at **your** cave system? Then let us know! Is there an event coming up? Let us know! Do you have a question, or have you tried something new that you would like to share? The more that we can keep discussion and the flow of information alive, the stronger we will be as an International Organisation. It is the hope of the President and the ISCA Board of Directors that this



newsletter will continue to grow and will become a way that **all members** can share their thoughts, ideas and experiences. So don't hold back - we want to hear from **you**. Please email the [editor](#) or the [President](#) with any articles or short pieces to be included in the next edition, Newsletter 38. Coming Soon!

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

I hope you are having a wonderful season! It is summer and hot in Texas. The summer season brings great business as children are on their summer break from school and families are traveling. This time of year we will see thousands of visitors each day at our show cave, Natural Bridge Caverns. Speaking of children, I am a very proud daddy to report the birth of my third daughter, Emelie Joye Wuest on June 26<sup>th</sup>. She and my wife Lexi are doing great!

June also marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Union of Speleology (UIS) and their 23<sup>rd</sup> International Karstological School which was held at the world famous ISCA member cave, Postojna in Slovenia. For 50 years, UIS has been developing and coordinating international speleology including scientific, technical, cultural, and economic aspects. ISCA is pleased to work with UIS on issues of common interest and continue to foster cooperation and partnership. Thanks to ISCA 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, Friedrich Oedl who represented ISCA at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

Congratulations UIS!

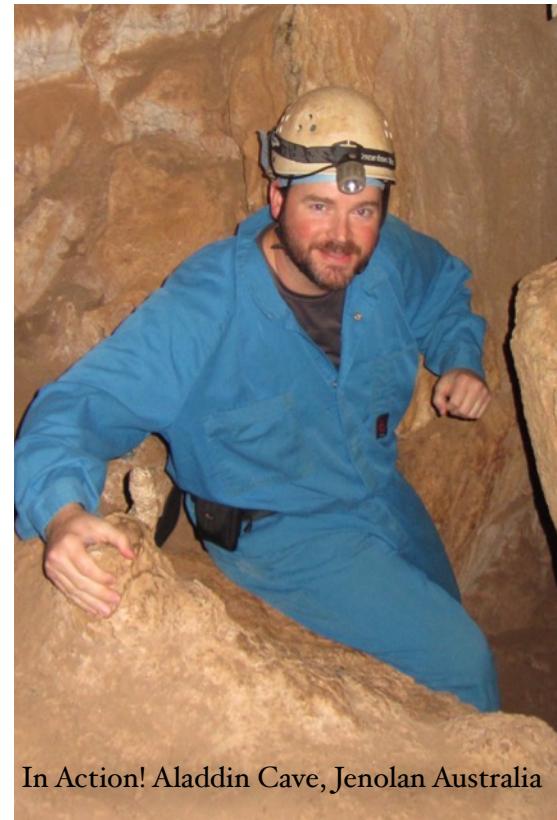
On a sad note, I have been reading many tributes as the international speleological community mourns the passing of Elery Hamilton-Smith. You will read more about this great man below. Our condolences go out to his family and friends.

Since the last newsletter, there has been a change in the Board of Directors. Director David Summers, Bermuda chose to step down creating a vacancy on the Board. According to the ISCA Constitution, the Board may fill casual vacancies and

appointed Guilhem de Grully, France. Welcome Guilhem to the Board and thank you for your willingness to be a Director. Thank you David for your many years of service to the leadership of ISCA. You are greatly appreciated and we value your continued involvement. The ISCA Board of Directors has also approved numerous new memberships to our association who are recognized below. I am very pleased to welcome all new members into our ISCA family, and I hope to meet you personally at our upcoming ISCA Meeting!

October is just over two months away, and I hope you have made arrangements to attend the ISCA Meeting in Germany and Austria. If you haven't, please do so soon! I want to thank ISCA Director, Yvonne Wagner from Saalfelder Feengrotten, Germany and ISCA 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, Friedrich Oedl from Eisriesenwelt Werfen, Austria for offering to host us and for organizing what will be an unforgettable ISCA Meeting. What a wonderful opportunity to experience the history, culture, caves, and beauty of these two countries with our ISCA friends. It will also be a great opportunity to meet with, network, share and learn from one another in the true spirit of ISCA.

I have found that attending ISCA Meetings, Conferences, and Congresses gives us the unique opportunity to experience the host's countries and regions in an exclusive and special way that could never be duplicated if we were simply tourists. Membership in ISCA truly has its privileges!



In Action! Aladdin Cave, Jenolan Australia

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter, and I hope it gets you excited to attend the ISCA meeting! Please complete your registration form and make your reservations as soon as possible because attendance is limited for this Meeting. I look forward to seeing you in Germany and Austria!

In the meantime, if there is anything I can do to help you, if you have interest in serving in some capacity, or if you have any suggestions regarding what we can do to make ISCA even better, please let me know.

God Bless,

*Brad Wuest*

President

International Show Caves Association



## UIS CELEBRATES FIFTY YEARS

In June 2015 at Postojna Cave, Slovenia, the International Union of Speleology celebrated 50 years as an organisation. UIS was founded in 1965 at Postojna during the 4th International Congress of Speleology and has subsequently grown to include over 60 member countries located on all continents of the world.

ISCA is often regarded as a 'child' of UIS, having been formed from within this organisation. However, as Vice President Oedl stated during the commemorative ceremony inside Postojna Cave, this 'child' will be 25 years old in November and as such ISCA hopes to be able to go hand and hand into the future with UIS and ISCA working collaboratively and productively.

President of UIS, Kyung Sik Woo, visited Eisriesenwelt Cave following the Postojna ceremony and confirmed again with Vice President Oedl the importance of the relationships between our two organisations. With UNESCO looking to make 2021 the official year of Caves and Karst, it is certain that we have much reason to continue this fine partnership into the future.

## VALE PROFESSOR ELEY HAMILTON-SMITH

The International caves community is poorer following the recent passing of legendary caver and environmental conservation advocate Elery Hamilton-Smith who died peacefully in Melbourne on June 27th 2015 aged 85. An inspirational speaker and provocative intellectual, Elery dedicated his life to the better understanding of caves and karst areas and to their protection. He co-authored the IUCN Guidelines for Cave and Karst Management as well as numerous papers on both the science of cave management and the social framework of show cave tourism and operation. He was regarded as the 'father' of the Australasian Cave and Karst Management Association (ACKMA), a leading contributor to the Australian Speleological Federation and to the Australasian Bat Society and was a member of the Order of Australia.

Elery was a gentleman and a scholar of the highest order. A tremendous friend and mentor, he was always generous in sharing his great knowledge and in encouraging the new generation of caves and cave managers to think deeply and to always question the concept of 'best practice'.

In mourning his passing, the innumerable tributes that have flooded in from all over the world to Elery make it very clear just how rich his life was, how many individuals he has touched and influenced and just what a tremendous legacy he leaves behind.



## NATIONAL CAVES ASSOCIATION CONVENTION SEPTEMBER 2015.



It certainly seems to be the year for 50th anniversary celebrations - both UIS and the NCA are commemorating this milestone in 2015. Longevity in any organisation is quite an achievement, but in a members based association it is quite unusual to not only exist, but to grow and prosper over such a period. However, this is precisely what the NCA has achieved and the 50 years of the NCA will be the focus of the association's annual convention.

Hosting the convention will be ISCA member Cave of the Mounds. Convention hosts Joe Klimczak and Ann Wescott will be well know to any recent ISCA Congress or Conference attendee and there is no doubt that they will be organising a superb program for the NCA Convention.

ISCA members are warmly invited to attend this convention. In addition to providing a splendid excuse to explore yet another beautiful corner of the world and take in a world class show cave system, it is another opportunity for members to gain insight into differing approaches to show cave

management and to meet and interact with our industry colleagues and friends from the USA.

[Registrations](http://www.cavern.com/Members/convention.asp) are now open - visit <http://www.cavern.com/Members/convention.asp> for all the details and join in the celebrations of the NCA's 50th year.



### THE PRESIDENT'S BABY!



It was during the 7th Congress of ISCA at Jenolan Caves Australia that our newly elected President first received the wonderful long distance news that he was to become a father again.

**Emelie Joye Wuest** was born on June 26th and is the third daughter of ISCA President Brad Wuest. Mum Lexi and daughter are both doing very well. President Wuest is also reported to be in good spirits as he is reminded that sleep is actually a luxury indulgence that he no longer requires in any meaningful duration.

Congratulations to the Wuest family for the beautiful addition to the family!

## BELIANSKA CAVE, SLOVAKIA - AN OLD CAVE WITH A NEW LOOK AND FEEL

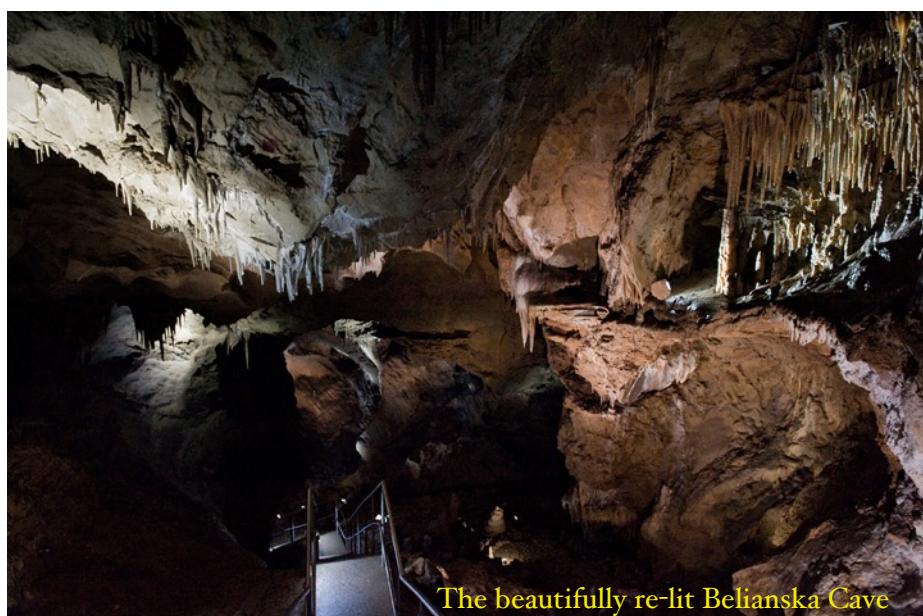
It is a story of how a dream can come true. The idea started with the EU's Structural Funds, where for a programming period of time we were able to write and finance project proposals for improvement of nature protected sites. Since all caves in Slovakia are protected by law, we were, by default, eligible for this programme. The project kicked off in 2012 but it took two more years to start the actual work. Writing about the amount of bureaucracy connected with this type of human activity would be another very, very long story, so let us instead focus on the subject. Two important things needed to improve - the handrails, in some places more than eighty years old, were to be replaced with stainless steel in the length of over 1100m. The other great task ahead was the replacement of the cave lights for something less heat emitting and more energy saving. Both of these tasks are part of the general nature protection standards - eliminating the need for maintenance with steel handrails and reducing the heat and formation of lampenflora, together with saving energy, with the new lighting.

If, in your life, you meet with similar challenges, you may first want to look around you and try to picture what you know and what you have seen elsewhere. And this is where ISCA comes to play. In the fairly recent past, when it had been much easier to take business trips abroad than it is now, I had the opportunity to see many show caves around the world as well as do something that is of at least the same importance; meet likeminded people from the field.

I will not talk too much about the obvious advantages of implementing stainless steel. Even though there are instances when this is not always the best solution, in the case of Belianska cave it certainly was. Rather, I would like to focus on the electrical part of the project, where we have overcome several important milestones. We have changed the voltage from 230V to 24V and we have installed a permanent power source with a diesel generator to supply the cave for the whole day. We have then changed the old lights for LEDs, a common practice nowadays.

But still, something was missing to me. The cave needed something more than just new "hardware." I have seen many very well lit caves — the Zbrasov Aragonite Cave in the Czech Republic and several caves in Australia on my visit back in 2011, to mention a few. In those cases, the cave was lit either by a cave photographer, or an architect with a personal connection to nature. So I spoke to my colleague, a mountaineer, caver and photographer Pavol Stanik, who did a great job with the lighting and was able to illuminate places that were previously left unseen. He played with the lights' colour temperatures, the reflections from the lakes and even with the dynamics of the dripping water. One visit to the cave is truly not enough to see it all.

I then collected some of my experience and ideas gained by "networking" in ISCA. One idea came from a presentation in Bermuda during the ISCA Congress in 2006, where David Summers invited a scenographer or stage designer who started to "perform magic" in the cave. Another idea came from meeting Sasha Chrapko in France in 2008, where he demonstrated a few new possibilities of his Germtec LED lights. All this gave me the notion of connecting everything together in three visual and musical performances in the one suitable place in the cave - The Music Hall. Initially, I had proposed three types of music to be artistically synchronised with the dynamic lights: temple music - since a cave is a



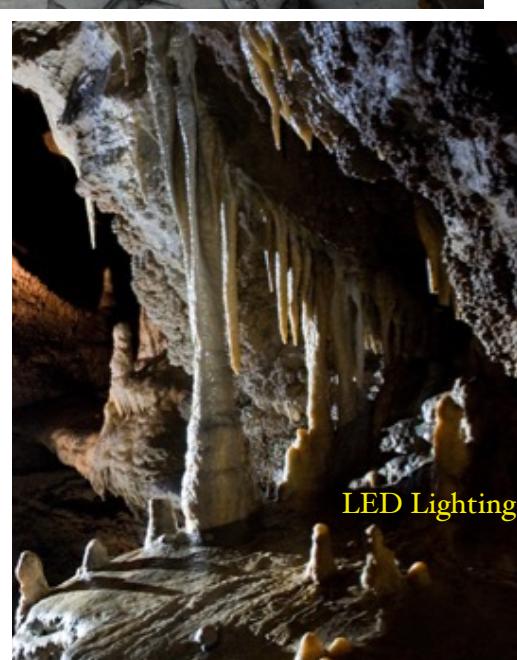
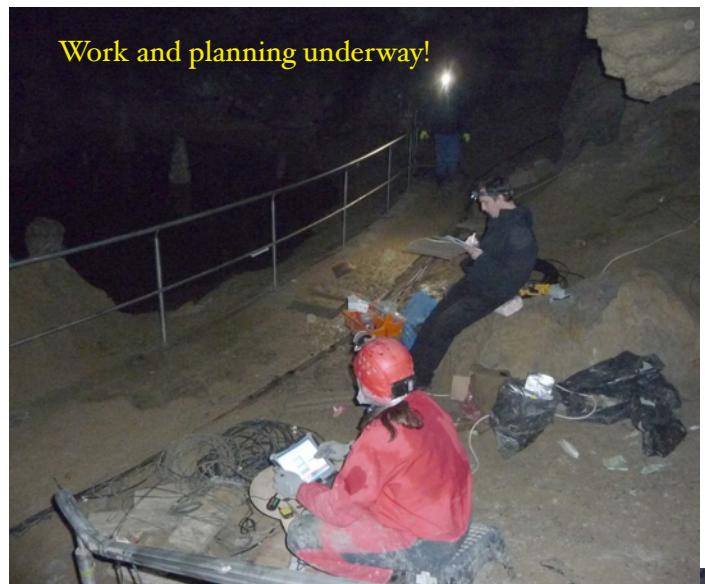
The beautifully re-lit Belianska Cave

kind of a natural temple, folklore music — to feel the country and the place we are in, and a piece of some modern music as the third choice.

In the end, as it often happens, I found the French saying *cherchez la femme* ring true for me. Well, I have to alter it a little, in this case it was *cherchez ma femme*, since it was my wife who had given me the contact for a stage designer Jan Ptacin and, towards the end of the project, the contact for a musical composer Peter Machajdik, who composed a special, original piece of music for the cave. Perhaps it is better not to put certain feelings and impressions into words, but in this case I have to admit that I became speechless when I saw and heard the performance for the first time. But that may just be my personal reaction... On behalf of all the people who helped bring these ideas to life, since it was a whole team of my colleagues and contracted companies, I can say that we did the best we could. We may have not reached the stars, but not for a lack of trying. And now, we have even more challenging ideas to pursue...

So finally, everyone is welcome to come and visit Belianska Cave.

**Peter Gazik, Slovak Caves Administration**



## WELCOME TO NEW ISCA MEMBERS

It is always a pleasure to welcome new members to the ISCA family, and it is pleasing to note that 2015 has seen the membership of our Association grow.

New **Full Members** of ISCA are:

- Yishui Canyon, China.
- Naracoorte Caves, Australia
- Gouffre De Padirac, France

New **Associate Members** of ISCA are:

- Alison Pritchard, Manager of Mulu Park Malaysia.

- Steve Bourne, Australia
- Cathie Plowman, Australia
- George Bradford, Manager Yarrangobilly Caves Australia

In addition there are two further application for full membership before the Board for consideration, being from Lipa Cave, Montenegro and from the Caves of Mire de Aire, Portugal.

The more we can grow our Association, the stronger it will be!

## 3D MAPPING OF CAVES, A 21ST CENTURY APPROACH

Some ISCA members are no doubt well aware of the technological advances that are changing the way that caves (and other natural and cultural heritage sites) can be surveyed and mapped. In particular, the use of three dimensional imaging has transformed what was once such a time consuming and labour intensive task.

A team of researchers and scientists from the CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) in Australia have pioneered such work, developing handheld mobile 3D laser scanners and, more recently, a mobile aerial platform known as 'The Bentwing'. These devices build complete 3D maps of environments. This has been successfully trialled at Jenolan and at Wombeyan Caves in NSW, Australia and has produced amazing results including scans within the caves themselves. The same technology has

also been used to scan and digitally map such structures as the Leaning Tower of Pisa and many other heritage liked structures internationally.

Members may wish to see the process and technology in action and are encouraged to have a look at the amazing [video](#) posted on YouTube which may be viewed at;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7SixXr3VMM>

As ISCA member Andy Spate noted, this video is truly mind-blowing! The potential applications of the technology are obvious and we can hope to see many more show caves around the world being mapped and preserved through this technology. The technology was even used at Jenolan Caves in early 2014 to create a 'virtual cave experience' for schools, with the Chifley Cave being digitally scanned and recreated as a walk through 3D experience.

## ISCA Calendar

21-25 September, 2015

NCA Convention, Cave of the Mounds Wisconsin USA

17-24 October, 2015

ISCA Meeting Saalfeld, Germany and Werfen, Austria

October 2016

ISCA Conference Al Hoota Cave, Oman

July 2017

17th UIS Congress Sydney, Australia

October 2018

8th Congress of ISCA, Frasassi Italy

## Contributors



BRAD WUEST

President of ISCA

FRIEDRICH OEDL

1st Vice President of ISCA.

PETER GAZIK

Director of ISCA. Thanks for the fantastic article on the redevelopment of the Belianska Cave!



3D imaging - Wombeyan Caves, Australia